

Amendments to the Claims:

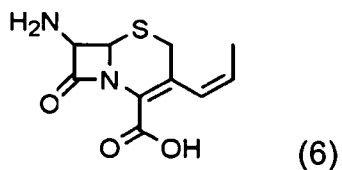
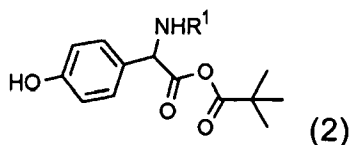
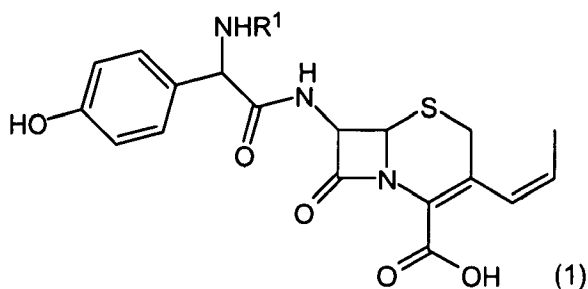
This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

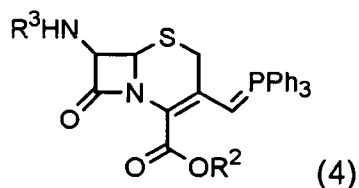
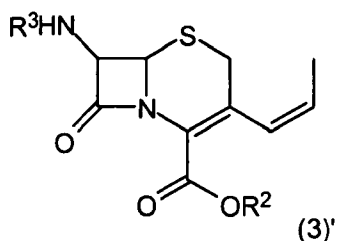
Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing a compound represented by the following formula 1 or its salt, which comprises:

reacting a compound represented by the following formula 4 with acetaldehyde in a mixed solvent comprising water, isopropanol, and methylenechloride in a volume ratio of 1:3-6:11-14 in the presence of a first base to stereospecifically prepare a compound represented by the following formula 3'; and

reacting the compound of the formula 3' with an anhydrous compound represented by the following formula 2 in the presence of a second base:





wherein R^1 is a hydrogen or an amino protecting group, R^2 is a hydrogen or a carboxyl protecting group, and R^3 is a hydrogen or an amino protecting group consisting of phenylacetyl group,

wherein when R^3 is a phenylacetyl group, R^2 is not a hydrogen in formula 3'; and

wherein, when at least one of R^2 and R^3 is a protecting group, all such protecting groups are removed from formula 3', thereby producing a compound represented by formula 6 prior to reacting it with the compound of formula 2.

2. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the volume ratio of water, isopropanol, and methylenechloride in the mixed solvent is 1:4:12.

3. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein the compound of the formula 3' or 6 reacts with the compound of the formula 2 at an equivalent ratio of 1 to 1.1-1.5.

4. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 1, wherein the compound of the formula 2 reacts with the compound of the formula 3 or 6 in a mixed solvent of water with an organic solvent selected from the group consisting of dimethylsulfoxide, dimethylformamide, dimethylacetamide, 1,4-dioxane, acetonitrile, dichloromethane, and a mixture thereof.
5. (Original) The process of claim 4, wherein in the mixed solvent, water is used in an amount of 0.05 to 0.3 parts by weight, based on 1 part by weight of the organic solvent.
6. (Original) The process of claim 1, wherein the second base is selected from the group consisting of N-methylmorpholine, triethylamine, diethylamine, n-tributylamine, N,N-dimethylaniline, and pyridine.